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## **Frequently asked questions – Social work and approved mental health professional (AMHP) education and training seminars.**

### **Introduction**

This document provides a summary of all the common questions which delegates asked across our social work and approved mental health professional education seminars delivered in 2013–14.

If you require any further information regarding any of the information contained within the document please contact us at: [education@hcpc-uk.org](mailto:education@hcpc-uk.org)

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## Standards

### **Q – In relation to SET 3.1, how will HCPC deal with changes around bursaries?**

We will take this into account when visiting the programme. We expect to see a financial commitment from the education provider to ensure all students who enrol on the programme are able to complete it. Changes in bursaries should clearly be identified in any business plan for the programme and the education provider should evidence how they intend to inform applicants to the programme about bursaries.

Once a programme has had open-ended approval confirmed, if you feel changes in bursaries significantly alters the way you met our standards, you will need to inform us through our monitoring processes – major change or annual monitoring.

Further information about these processes can be found on our website at: [www.hcpc-uk.org/education/processes/](http://www.hcpc-uk.org/education/processes/)

### **Q – What should consent forms include when considering how to meet SET 3.14?**

The purpose of this SET is mainly concerned with preventing physical injuries and preventing or managing emotional distress, and helps to make sure that education and placement providers acknowledge possible risks. It is up to the education provider to decide how best to approach this issue. You should tell students how involved they are expected to be in the programme and if a student opts out from certain activities, we will want to see how you ensure any standard of proficiency (SOP) missed can be attained to ensure that upon graduation, students meet all the SOPs.

We will want to check that there are systems in place for gaining students' informed consent. Normally, we need to see evidence in document form, such as a copy of a consent form or the relevant guidelines.

Further information about SET 3.14 can be found in our Standards of education and training guidance on our website at: [www.hcpc-uk.org/education/downloads](http://www.hcpc-uk.org/education/downloads)

## Standards / criteria

### **Q – What is the definition of a professional lead in the content of SET 3.4 / criteria B.4?**

Someone who has the professional lead is someone who has overall professional responsibility for the programme and is 'appropriately qualified and experienced'. This person will normally be registered with us. However, we recognise that it may be possible for a programme to be led by someone who is not registered on the relevant part of the Register. If this is the case, you should include more details about their qualifications and experiences. If they are not registered, you must make

sure their job title does not include a protected title or gives an impression they are registered with us.

If the person with overall professional responsibility for the programme is registered with us, but is not registered in the relevant profession, we will want to see how you provide information specific to the relevant profession, and resources to support them in their role.

**Q – How does the HCPC review policies that are plans or not finalised?**

We will expect to see documentary evidence of the plans, and will discuss the implementation of these plans at the visit. We try to strike a balance between reviewing intentions around policies and considering how these will work in practice. However, if essential policies are still in draft form, there may be conditions asking the education provider to submit the final copy of the policy.

**Q – How can we as education providers demonstrate that we have effective partnerships and MOUs in place?**

You will need to demonstrate how the arrangements with your partnerships work. We will want to see evidence of the programme management structure. This may include the lines of responsibility and links to the management of practice placements, highlighting the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved. We will ask to see the arrangement in place and find out which regulations and procedures apply to students and staff. We will want to be sure that there are clear procedures to deal with any problems in this area, and these should be clearly written into any partnership arrangement.

Monitoring processes

**Q – What constitutes a major change and when would one apply for social work and AMHP programmes?**

Once a programme has had open-ended approval confirmed by our Education and Training Committee the programme is subject to our monitoring processes, including the major change process. We consider a major change to be a change to a programme that significantly alters the way in which our standards of education and training (SETs) / section 1 criteria for AMHPs are met and therefore how individuals will attain the standards of proficiency (SOPs) / section 2 criteria.

Please note that not all changes to a programme significantly alter how a programme continues to meet our standards. When a change occurs to an approved programme we expect you to consider the impact on how the standards / criteria continue to be met.

There are no clear guidelines or criteria on how a change can impact on how our standards / criteria are met. However examples are provided in the Major change supplementary guidance for education providers which can be available here: [www.hpc-uk.org/assets/documents/10002C0CMajorChange-Oct2009-PDF.pdf](http://www.hpc-uk.org/assets/documents/10002C0CMajorChange-Oct2009-PDF.pdf)

Further guidance on what constitutes a major change can be found on our website at: [www.hcpc-uk.org/education/processes/majorchange/](http://www.hcpc-uk.org/education/processes/majorchange/)

### **Q – What is annual monitoring and what sort of documentation is required?**

Once a programme has had open-ended approval confirmed by our Education and Training Committee the programme is subject to our monitoring processes, including the annual monitoring process. Annual monitoring is where we consider whether a programme continues to meet our standards / criteria by looking back at how the programme has been delivered over the previous two academic years. We draw heavily on internal documents to make the process as efficient as possible for both sides and to remove the need for regular visits.

Annual monitoring involves two types of monitoring submissions; audit or a declaration. Education providers are divided into group A and group B and each year will either submit an audit or declaration according to their group.

Each autumn, we contact education providers with information on the process for their particular programme over the forthcoming academic year. They must then fill in the relevant audit or declaration form for their group and send it to us by the deadline given in our initial correspondence. This date will always be after the education provider's own internal annual monitoring process so that the information we need is available to them.

We would expect to receive the following documents.

- External examiners' reports for the last two academic years
- Responses to the external examiners' reports for the last two academic years
- Internal quality documents for the last two academic years

More information on the annual monitoring process can be found at: [www.hcpc-uk.org/education/processes/monitoring/](http://www.hcpc-uk.org/education/processes/monitoring/)

### **Pre-Visit**

### **Q – How are joint events managed?**

It is the education provider's responsibility to manage the agenda and ensure the agenda meets the needs of the relevant parties involved and finalise any arrangements. If you wish to change the agenda in cases where you have a joint or multi-professional visit; are carrying out more than one validation process at the event; or to include meetings with additional stakeholders, you should discuss this

with the education executive allocated to your visit during the preparation for the visit.

It is the role of the independent chair to ensure that the event is facilitated appropriately. The specific role of the independent chair may vary according to the education provider on whose behalf they are acting. However, in general, we require the chair to:

- manage the visit and ensure that it is conducted in accordance with the requirements of all parties on the joint panel;
- be the spokesperson for joint panel;
- encourage an 'inclusive approach' (with an emphasis on dialogue, as opposed to a cross questioning or adversarial approach);
- ensure appropriate introductions;
- guide discussion;
- arbitrate on disagreements;
- direct questioning in line with the requirements of all parties on the joint panel;
- ensure that all parties at joint visits have sufficient time to engage in discussions;
- keep the joint panel to time; and
- summarise and present the conclusions of the joint panel to the programme team.

For more information on how to manage joint events, please refer to our Guidelines for HCPC approval visits at: [www.hcpc-uk.org/education/downloads/](http://www.hcpc-uk.org/education/downloads/)

**Q – Will we have a nominated person to contact during the approval process and how quickly will this person be allocated?**

When the approval visit date is confirmed you will be informed of the education executive who will be your main contact through the process. Please note that a member of the HCPC education staff (referred to as an education executive) is assigned to education providers to cover a particular process, for example the approval process, annual monitoring or major change. This means that the individual who you will be contact with will change throughout the lifespan of the education programme.

Further details about the approval process can be found on our website at: [www.hcpc-uk.org/education/processes/](http://www.hcpc-uk.org/education/processes/)

At the visit

**Q – Can the independent chair be outsourced?**

Yes. We expect you to appoint an independent and experienced chair (or convenor) for each approval visit. It is essential that the appointee is independent of the

programme to be considered as well as independent of any interests represented by the joint panel.

An independent chair may be a senior or experienced member of a different faculty, school, or department within the education provider or from a partner institution who has no involvement with the programme being visited. We expect that your chair will have experience of chairing large meetings such as external quality assurance events (eg QAA Major Reviews, Care Quality Commission inspection) and / or joint validations and professional / statutory accreditation visits.

For more information on independent chair, please refer to our Guidelines for HCPC approval visits at:

[www.hpc-uk.org/Assets/documents/10003BBCGuidelinesforHCPCApprovalvisitsforeducationproviders.pdf](http://www.hpc-uk.org/Assets/documents/10003BBCGuidelinesforHCPCApprovalvisitsforeducationproviders.pdf)

**Q – Can the HCPC run joint approval events for social work and AMHP programmes, and will the meetings be integrated?**

This can happen. However education providers need to consider the practicalities of running a visit like this and speak to the education executive involved when planning the agenda. We expect the education provider to treat these visits as a multi-professional visit; therefore there will be two HCPC panels, one to assess the social work programme(s) and one to assess the AMHP programme(s). Although some individuals may be involved with both the AMHP and social work programmes, we expect the delivery of the programmes to be different in some significant ways. Therefore it may not be appropriate to hold one meeting with both programme teams to discuss different aspects of the programmes.

**Q – Is the third visitor attending the social work and AMHP visits a lay visitor and what is their role?**

No. For all our visits, we normally source two experienced profession specific visitors who have a mix of education and practitioner experience. For the first year three visitors attended as part of the HCPC panel. The third visitor was from another profession and was there to provide experience of our processes and support to the new social work visitors. All three visitors reviewed the whole programme. This may continue into the second academic year of social work visits.

**Q – Can education providers submit information on the day of the visit?**

Education providers can submit additional documentary evidence on the day of the visit, but the HCPC visitors may only have limited opportunity to review these documents due to time constraints. Therefore, conditions may be put on standards if the visitors do not have the time to review the documentation. It is best to ensure that the visitors have all the evidence prior to the visit to ensure that they have plenty of time to review the documentation.

**Q – Who is required to be present at the meeting with the senior team?**

We do not set requirements about who should be at this meeting, although we suggest possible attendees on our draft agendas. The education provider needs to make a judgement about who attends this meeting, so the HCPC panel can discuss issues with those responsible for the resourcing and financing (as opposed to the delivery) of the programme. For more information please refer to the Guidelines for HCPC approval visits available on our website at: [www.hcpc-uk.org/education/downloads/](http://www.hcpc-uk.org/education/downloads/)

AMHP specific

**Q – Is there an AMHP guidance document, similar to the standards of education and training (SETs) guidance?**

We have drawn on the standards of education and training to help us to develop the criteria for education providers delivering AMHP training (section one of the criteria). The standards of education and training are the standards all pre-registration programmes must meet to be approved by us. As such, the guidance for education providers which outlines how the standards can be met is also applicable to the AMHP criteria. Therefore, we encourage education providers undergoing the approval process to use the SETs guidance.

Education providers will need to consider the SETs guidance and how the information contained within this publication can be used appropriately to inform how they meet the AMHP criteria.

We have developed a useful reference document which maps the criteria in section one to the SETs. This, together with the Standards of education and training guidance, can be downloaded from our website at: [www.hcpc-uk.org/education/downloads/](http://www.hcpc-uk.org/education/downloads/)

**Q – Can you give me more information on the link between Section 2 criteria and competency in the statutory instrument? They don't seem to correlate.**

Section 2 of the criteria for AMHP programmes sets out our expectations of the knowledge, understanding and skills that an individual must have when they complete their AMHP training. They are the threshold criteria we consider necessary to protect the public.

When we drafted the criteria we considered the following documents:

- the GSCC's specific requirements for AMHP education programmes;
- the core mental health specialist requirements and standards set out in the requirements for AMHP education programmes;
- the key competencies set out in the Schedule 2 Requirements; and
- our standards of education and training.

We devised section 2 of the criteria according to the competencies set out in Schedule 2 to the Regulations. The criteria reflect the content of the Regulations in this section so that a student who completes an approved AMHP programme fulfils Schedule 2 to the Regulations. We did not exactly replicate the Regulations in this section as we wanted to ensure that the criteria were similar in style to our other standards and focused on outcomes.

Given that the AMHP roles applies to a number of professions who practice in different environments, we do not stipulates how individuals completing AMHP programmes must be able to demonstrate the competencies set out in section 2 of the criteria after training.

**Q – As AMHP programmes were recently revalidated by the General Social Care Council (GSCC), when should education providers make changes to these programmes?**

We will review the programme as it will run from the intake following the visit. If there are any significant or fundamental changes with the way a programme runs before the visit, for example a change in validating body or the creation of additional provision, then we expect the education provider to highlight this to the education executive when arranging the visit.

Once an AMHP programme has open-ended approval confirmed the programme team will be required to inform us about changes to how the programme continues to meet the criteria through our regular monitoring processes. Annual monitoring and major change, both are documentary processes reviewed by a panel of visitors. Both processes only review changes to the programmes, they are not a full review of the criteria.

However, if upon review of a major change submission or annual monitoring audit, visitors recommend to our Education and Training Committee (ETC) there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate the criteria continue to be met, an approval visit may be required.

Further information about the monitoring processes can be found on our website at: [www.hcpc-uk.org/education/processes/](http://www.hcpc-uk.org/education/processes/)

## Student suitability

**Q – Considering social work education providers are unable to engage with the Student Suitability Scheme following confirmation of open-ended approval, how do we check whether an individual has been removed from a programme previously?**

Our Council believes that the most effective means of assuring the fitness to practise of social work students in England is through the standards of education and training (SETs) and the approval of education and training programmes. These standards

will ensure that education providers have processes in place to deal effectively with concerns about the conduct of students.

Once we have approved a programme, we can be satisfied that education providers have the procedures in place to complete sufficient background checks. They will also have the power to remove students from the programmes following any issue of non-disclosure.

The standards will also ensure that suitable arrangements are in place to manage and monitor students' learning on practice placements and that students' become aware of and understand their obligations under our standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

A prohibited record is maintained and available on our website. The record contains those students who are not permitted to participate in a social work programme in England. A student will be entered onto the record if a complaint is well founded and the Adjudicator makes a Determination which prohibits the student from participating in a social work programme. This may apply permanently, for a specified period, or until specified conditions are met.

More information on the social work student suitability scheme in England can be found at: [www.hcpc-uk.org/education/studentsuitability/](http://www.hcpc-uk.org/education/studentsuitability/)